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PARENT LANDS OF OUR ALGONQUINS AND HURONS

BY

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Parent Lands of our Algonquins and Hurons.

By Very Rev. W.R. Harris, D.D., LL.D., Litt.D.:

PREAMBLE.

Before entering upon the study of the subject embodied in the title of this paper let us hurriedly and briefly consider the views advanced by authors and theorists to explain the origin of man in North, Central and South America.

Some writers, copying the "Responses Critiques" of Ballet, regard the American Indian as *autochthons*, or as human beings evolved from or separately created in America and independent of those existing at any time on other continents. Lord Kingsborough, in his preface to his voluminous and magnificent compilation "Antiquities of Mexico," was of the opinion that the aboriginal inhabitants of America were descendants from a remnant of a pre-diluvian race of men who came to America sometime before the great Noachic cataclysm. He contends that the American Indians constitute to-day the oldest race of human beings upon the earth. Plausible arguments and ingenious sophistries have been advanced to support the claims of priority of settlement of the Chinese, Welsh and Japanese. The French anthropologist, Campones, favoured an early Carthaginian colony, while Kercher and Huet contended that the Indians of America are of Egyptian origin. Sir William Jones pleads for an Asiatic origin, and some British and American antiquaries hold that the Indians are the sons and daughters of the lost tribes of Israel.

Humboldt in his "Essai Politique" was of the opinion that the Mexican Indians were the descendants of the Hiongnoos who, according to Chinese history, left China under their leader Puno in the dynasty of Ghingis-Lu (A. C. 200), entered Siberia and were never again heard of.

Malte-Brun after a minute investigation concludes that tribes connected with the Finnish, Ostiack, Permian, and Caucasian families, passing along the borders of the frozen ocean, and crossing over Behring's Straits spread themselves in different directions towards Greenland and Chili; and that other tribes allied to the Japanese and Chinese, proceeding along the coast, penetrated to Mexico.

Again we are confronted with innumerable volumes tracing the origin of the Indians to Canaanites, Phoenicians, Mongols, Malays and Scythians. Many who have written on the subject are of the opinion that America received its first inhabitants from islands which lie between the extremities of Asia and America, that is to say from, Yezo, Gama's Land and other lands, including a cluster of isles, possibly the Aleutian Islands. All these suppositions are now relegated to oblivion and their ghosts will not presumably walk again.

THEORY OF A SUBMERGED CONTINENT.

The theory of a submerged continent which, in past ages, was inhabited by a civilized people—a land which stretched across the Atlantic from Europe and Africa to America—is now admitted by many scientists to be the only satisfactory

solution of the problem involving the origin of the American Indian. Scott Elliott in his book—"The Story of Atlantis" accepts the theory of a lost continent and with Ignatius Donnelly in his "Lost Atlantis" and Henry Scharf in his "Origin of Life in America," supports his contention with very plausible, if not convincing arguments.

The study of ethnology and the search for Geologic truth is surely a noble occupation. But when that study is conducted upon severe principles, and with the aid of deep research, it will be found to combine the intellectual enjoyment of the mathematician, with the rapture of the poet and ever to open new sources of interest and delight.

While endeavouring to trace our Canadian Indians back to their cradle lands you will permit me to invite your attention to a description of these lands and their inhabitants before the daring Genoese sailed on his wondrous voyage of discovery.

THE ANCIENT CITY OF PALENQUE, CHIAPAS.

I well remember the evening hours I passed alone amid the ruins of the pre-Columbian city of Palenque, near the boundary of Yucatan. Everywhere around me were the gruesome memorials of a civilization and a religion which may have escaped the Noachic deluge, but had perished and passed away, as all civilizations and gentile religions, by a mysterious law of disintegration, vanish and disappear.

The repose, the stillness, the utter loneliness and abandonment of the dead city oppressed me with their burden of isolation and sadness. The sombre buildings—the abode of the scorpion and the centipede—the mutilated and wondrous statuary groups, where the cunning of the sculptor gave to the inert stone all the warmth and vitality of life, the shattered altars and fallen pillars, the utter silence and loneliness shrouding tablets, walls and columns, brought back to my mind memories of the ruined cities of Thebes, of Karnac and Babylon. But the changeless dark green of the foliage, the hue of the moss, and the gloomy shadings of the buildings of Palenque, wrap in sadness this ancient city in a shroud that only a tropic land and a tropic climate may weave.

The epigraphic signs on the tablets of stone, the unfamiliar stone faces, the hieroglyphic sculpture on sepulchral walls, and, above all, the heavy odour of decomposing tropical vegetation, separate this phantom in the wilderness from the fallen cities of all other lands, and give to it a character of its own and an entity unlike anything seen in Europe or in Asia.

Everywhere around me were ruins out of which came the tamarind trees stirred by the breath of the desert breezes and caressed by desert air, and no one, absolutely no one but myself, at that hour and in this weird and lonely place to contemplate the wreck and ruin of avenging time. Around me and upon all sides were heaps of ruins, ghastly in their sadness and loneliness for even the stone faces had a solemn sadness like unto the faces of mourners bereaved of their beloved.

These gigantic stones, the cyclopean walls, the colossal pillars were painful reminders of a race conquered by the foe, by plague, or annihilated by the vengeance of God. The volcano of Masaya, in the sister state of Guatemala, that for long years has been cold, is less majestic in the stern solitude of its crater than is this dead Palenque.



Stone figure on altar panel,
PALENQUE, CHIAPAS.

The Christian philosopher devoted to the study of the past or the future, the man of faith, or of science who gazes upon these melancholy remains as he wanders among these wrecks and ruins of time, studies the weird figures and looks upon the unfamiliar faces of the unknown dead, feels through his veins, nerves and arteries an emotion of terror and awe always produced by the oppression of desert solitude, or by the colossal remains of a buried and forgotten past.

This abandoned city, with its terraces and temples, its pyramids and sculptured figures of men and women, tells more eloquently than written history of the great antiquity of the primitive civilization of the American Indian. For anything we know it may antedate all the civilizations of Egypt and Ethiopia.

In the remains of many of the pre-Columbian cities of Mexico, Chiapas and Central America we behold the most elaborate examples of sculpture and stucco ornamentation adorning the altars, panels and walls of the buildings—the work of a people skilled in architecture, drawing and painting, and beyond doubt, excelling in arts that have perished.* In many of the halls still standing are arabesques, fashioned in mosaic, fret-work and delicate tracery not unworthy of a place in modern decorative art. Some of the sculptured figures are of heroic dimensions. The curiously designed reliefs, the unfamiliar figures of the altars, and the panel work on the inner walls of Copan are not surpassed by the temple specimens of Egypt and Assyria on exhibition in Paris and London.

The pillars and stone tablets which carry hierograms are remarkably well executed. These pictographs or secret writings were executed in symbols or characters known only to the priests or learned men of the race.

We have not, unfortunately, been able to decipher them, so that the characters on the monuments of Copan, Palenque, Quirigua and Mayapan furnish us no data or information. The Maya system of symbolic writing appears to be a species of mnemonics or signs to aid the memory. The hierographs on the Palenque tablets—now in the National Museum, Mexico City—are in perpendicular rows, and, for aught we know, the characters may be alphabetic and stand for a written language. On these tablets we behold a wonderful system of symbolism, and to interpret it, the Aztec or Mexican picture-writing affords us no help.

Apart from the accurate and familiar descriptions of many of the temples and great buildings left us by early Spanish writers, and of the art and splendour of Mexican structures, we have the testimony of Bernal Diaz de Castillo, the brave and rugged companion of the Spanish conqueror in his brilliant campaigns ending in the conquest of Mexico.

In Bernal Diaz' "History of the Conquest of Mexico" we find many surprising descriptions of wonderful buildings standing in the cities entered on the way from Vera Cruz to Mexico City. Of the city of Cempoal he writes; "we were surprised at the beauty of the buildings some of which had been lately plastered in which art these people are very expert." He speaks of large structures and fortifications of lime and stone and he adds: "Appearances demonstrated that we had entered a new country, for the temples were very lofty and the terraced dwellings and houses of the Caciques were plastered and whitewashed." Of the city of Cholula he tells us that it much resembled Valladolid in Spain.

*"It can hardly be doubted that these people were acquainted with many scientific instruments, strange inventions, compared with our own." Kingsborough, III, p. 128.

"Architecture, sculpture, and painting, all the arts which embellish life, had flourished in this overgrown forest; orators, warriors, and statesmen, beauty, ambition and glory had here lived and passed away." Stephens-Yucatan, vol. I. p. 103.

It "had a hundred lofty white towers, which were the temples of their idols. The principal temple was higher than that of Mexico and each of these buildings was placed in a spacious court." Approaching the city of Mexico, he is moved to enthusiasm by the spectacle of its grandeur. "We could compare it," he says, "to nothing but the enchanted scenes we had read of in Amandis de Gaul, from the great towers and temples and other edifices of lime and stone which seemed to rise up out of the water.

"We were received by the great lords of that country, relations of Montezuma who conducted us to our quarters which were palaces magnificently built of stone, the timber of which was cedar, with spacious courts and apartments hung with canopies of the finest cotton. The whole was ornamented with works of art painted, and admirably plastered and whitened, and it was rendered more delightful by numbers of beautiful birds." While reading his "True History" as Diaz terms his book, we should remember that it was written at a time when there were those then living who knew the facts and could call attention to any exaggerations or errors made by the writer. His history was never impeached; its fidelity to truth was admitted by all contemporaneous and subsequent writers.

Having seen in Yucatan, Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras many of the remains of these prehistoric cities, we are satisfied that his descriptions are as true and his statements as reliable as those written in any of our accredited books of travel.*

As if to confirm the statements of Bernal Diaz, Herrera, one of the most reliable and accurate of the early Spanish historians, writes of Yucatan: "The whole country is divided into eighteen districts, and in all of them were so many and such stately *stone buildings* that it was amazing. In many of these edifices were carved the Figures of naked men, with earrings after the Indian manner, stone idols, images, tigers, vases and jars.†

Here is what Professor Hiram Bingham writes of the ruins of Meechu-Pichu, which he visited in the year 1911: "The ruins of this ancient city are on an almost inaccessible ridge, two thousand feet above the Terabamba river. They are of great beauty and magnificence, and include *palaces, baths, temples* and about one hundred and fifty (stone) houses. The huge blocks of *white granite*, some of them twelve feet long, were so carefully cut that they match perfectly. The walls have withstood the elements for *at least two thousand years*."

Taking our information from the writings of these early and later eye witnesses we are presented with vivid photographs of these decayed cities as they

*Bernal Diaz del Castillo was born in Spain in 1493, and in 1514 accompanied Cordova in his first expedition to Yucatan. When Grijalva, the following year, also sailed for Yucatan Diaz was with him. He finally enlisted under the banner of Cortez and took part in the skirmishes and battles of the conquistador. He accompanied Cortez on his terrible march to Honduras. In 1568 he was appointed regidor (prefect or mayor) of the city of Guatemala. His *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva Espana* was published, 1632, in Madrid, 63 years after his death.

†Antonio de Herrera, the great historian, was born, 1549, in Spain. He was a voluminous writer of history, but his most important work was the *Historia General de las Indias occidentales*. It covers the time from the landing of Columbus in 1492 down to 1554, thirty-four years after the conquest of Mexico. The history is in five folio volumes and records for a period of sixty years the facts associated with the conquest, colonizations and missionary labours of New Spain. It is the most erudite, accurate and complete record of these early times. Herrera collected a vast amount of information, taken from the most authentic sources, on the manners, institutions and customs of the Indians. The history, translated from the Spanish by John L. Stephens, may be consulted in any large library.



Colossal Statue and Hieroglyphics.
COPAN. HONDURAS.

were in other days, with buildings of lime and stone, moulded and carved figures of their gods, courts, strong walls, sculptured figures and elaborate ornamentation.

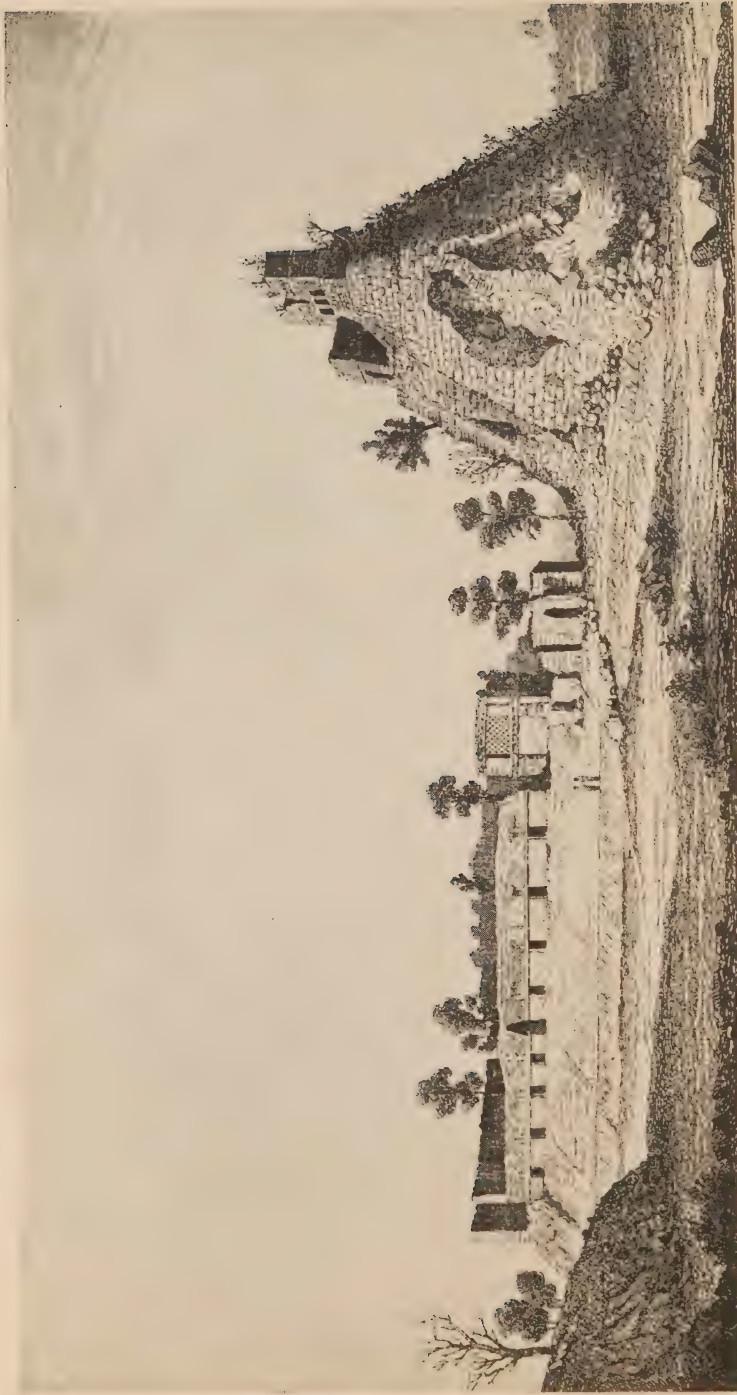
In the libraries of Dresden and Vienna are preserved the drawings of the figures, hieroglyphics and faces made from the monuments and tablets which escaped destruction. Many of these drawings, with early Mexican manuscripts, are reproduced in Humboldt's works and in the "Antiquities of Mexico," the magnificent compilation in nine large volumes by Lord Kingsborough.

THE PHANTOM CITIES

Mournfully beautiful are the ruins of the cities of Copan, Uxmal, Palenque and Quirigua, surrounded by forests painful in the duration and intensity of their silence. They are phantoms in a wilderness shrouded by a luxuriant tropic vegetation. When we demand of the Indians we meet lingering near the ruins, to tell us how many centuries have passed away since the quarry was opened to obtain stones for the buildings; how long was the city inhabited, and when, and why was it abandoned, there comes no answer to our questionings.

If, as it is conceded by students of Central American history, the Quiches preceded the Mayas and another race antedated the Quiches and built the cities, temples and halls whose colossal remains are found all over Central America, Yucatan and Mexico, what assurances have we that many civilized communities did not successively appear, run their course, and perish in the veiled ages of prehistoric times? And by prehistoric times, I mean the ages between the creation of man and the beginning of authentic history. In order to account for the splendour and magnitude of the temples and public buildings of these cities, a centralized form of government must have existed. These wonderful structures could have been erected only by the expenditure of great labour—probably slave labour and under a highly organized system of superintendence. Possibly the government was an imperial autocracy, or it may have been like unto that of Greece, which was in religion and language one nation though, politically, a confederacy of sovereign states. The architecture and system of writing of these vanished people are different from those of any known race of men, ancient or modern. They are of a new order and are entirely and absolutely independent creations. They stand alone, without models or masters from abroad; their architecture originated among themselves. Their culture and refinement were not borrowed from Europe or Asia. They were a distinct, a separate people, existing apart from and independent of other continents, and apparently indigenous, like the animals, plants and fruits of the soil.

No analogies of art or culture assimilate the ancient civilization of America with that of any known people. Their structural designs and ornamental embellishments were their own and yet the remains of their great buildings at Uxmal in Yucatan, Quirigua, Guatemala, Copan in Honduras, and Mitla in Mexico are, to-day, as imposing and of as high an order of architecture as are those of ancient Egypt and Assyria. These primitive people built aqueducts, constructed causeways and laid many miles of paved roads. The immense ruins which the Spaniards discovered in Mexico and Central America and particularly in the riverine lands of Columbia and Uruguay, the highways cut, in many cases, through stubborn rock, or constructed of enormous blocks of stone, all these with the remarkable remains of ancient canals involving great feats of engineering,



Ruins of Prehistoric City of Uxmal, Yucatan.

prove conclusively the high plane of material civilization which these mysterious people reached. Considering the age in which these people lived, perhaps no better proof of their advanced civilization can be adduced than their methods of calculating time. The Mexican Calendar stone, now on exhibition in the National Museum, Mexico City, demonstrates the actuality of Aztec or Toltec civilization through their unique system of counting time.

Their civil year, consisting of 365 days was divided into eighteen months of twenty days and five intercalary, or supplementary days. For the ordaining of their religious or ceremonial days they had a system which, by means of a cycle of fifty-two years and a wonderful method of computation, correlated with one another the civil year and the astronomical year. And this was done by adding thirteen days at the end of the cycle.

Humboldt was of the opinion, that the names of the days of a month, divided into four weeks of five days, were borrowed from an early Zodiac formed of 27 or 28 lunar months, used from a remote antiquity in India, Thibet and Tartary.

There can be no doubt but that the calendar of these people indicates an accuracy of observation and an astronomical knowledge far superior to the scientific skill of the semi-barbarians living at the time of the Spanish conquest. Their civilization was then descending, or had already descended, to barbarism. That the ancestors of the Mayas, the Quiches and Aztecs were familiar with the causes of eclipses we know from their astronomical maps which show the disk of the moon projected on that of the sun. The sun-dial was, so far as we know, the only astronomical instrument they used.

THE CALENDAR STONE OR STONE OF THE SUN.

The great *Calendar stone*, discovered buried in Cathedral square, Mexico city, proves, according to Professor Henriques Palacios, that these ancient people could mark the hours of the day with accuracy, that they were acquainted with the period of the solstice and of the Equinoxes and could foretell with precision the transit of the sun across the Zenith of Mexico. This wonderful Calendar stone, on the face of which is deeply cut, symbolic, astronomic and cryptic figures, is of dark porphyry and weighed, it is computed, fifty tons when hewed from the mountain. Its weight to-day is 53,790 pounds. During the reign of the Montezumas it was transported to Mexico City from beyond Lake Chalco, a distance of thirty miles over land intersected by canals. The central figure of the stone represents the sun and the year; the twenty figures placed in a circle around the sun stand for the twenty days of the Aztec month; the date 13th, *acatle*, above the head of the sun on the border of the stone, corresponds with our date 1479, A.D.*

Writing of this stone, Prescott says:

"When we reflect on this difficulty of hewing such a tremendous mass from its hard basaltic bed without the aid of iron tools, and of transporting it such a distance across land and water without the help of animals, we must feel admiration for the ingenuity and enterprise of the people who accomplished it."

Writing of the advanced agriculture of these ancient Americans, Professor O. F. Cook, who was a member of the expedition sent to Peru in 1915 by Yale University, says: "At a time when our ancestors in northern Europe were still

*Dr. Palacios, Professor Valentini, and Señor Chavero have given a larger interpretation to the cryptic figures, but their readings require confirmation.



Wonderful sculptured figure. Prehistoric city of Copan, HONDURAS.

utter savages, settled agricultural communities must have existed in the Peruvian region. The native agriculture of this land," he adds in his article which appeared in the National Geographic Magazine, May 1916, "reached an advanced stage of reclamation projects long before America was discovered by Europeans. Our undertakings sink into insignificance in the face of what this vanished race accomplished." "With tools made of an alloy of tin and copper," writes Prescott in his "History of the Conquest of Mexico," "they cut not only metals, but with the aid of a silicious dust, the hardest substances, such as basalt, porphyry, amethysts, and émeralds. They cast also vessels of gold and silver, carving them in a very delicate manner. They imitated very nicely the figures of animals and, what was extraordinary, could mix the metals in such a manner that the feathers of a bird, or the scales of a fish should be alternately of gold and silver. The Spanish goldsmiths admitted their superiority over themselves in these ingenious works."

In Mexico and Peru copper and tin were alloyed and hardened to the consistency of iron, gold and silver and bronze were skilfully beaten out and worked into filigree; there were excellent images of singing birds in gold and in silver, and a profusion of gold plate.

The Department of American Antiquities in the National Museum, Mexico City, is among the most notable in the world, and is a veritable treasure house of pre-Columbian relics and pre-historic "finds." In one room of this department are exhibited specimens of the famous Aztec picture writings, and Aztec maps and drawing of Tenochitlan, now the City of Mexico. Here also are arms, jewels, glazed pottery, and cloth made from the fibres of the heneguen and maguey plants. Beautiful examples of feather cloth woven from extremely delicate floss of cotton, combined with feathers and rabbit's fur, polished crystals, obsidian or volcanic glass manufactured into delicate objects of ornamental or economic value are on exhibition, while figures of gold and silver, exquisitely wrought and filigree ornaments of beautiful design fill many cases in the Museum.

When examining these strange and wonderful exhibits you cannot help regretting that from the wreck of this primitive civilization some of the arts belonging to it were not saved and handed down to us. We do not know for a certainty how their astronomers determined the apparent motion of the sun, nor measured the length of the solar year. We cannot understand how they cut and polished crystals and other stones; manufactured delicate and complicated articles from volcanic glass; cast figures of gold and silver in one piece; made filigree ornaments without brazing or soldering: applied to pottery smooth and transparent glazes, such as we find in our own fine ware, and with colors that, after remaining for centuries buried among ruins, are yet fresh and brilliant. Nor do we know how they were able to weave rabbits' fur and beautifully delicate feathers with the finest tissues of cotton into valuable cloth.

Here it may be pertinent to enquire into the origin of this extraordinary civilization of these ancient Americans. Anthropologists, such as d'Orbigny, Heinrich Schliemann and Brasseur de Bourbourg are of the opinion that the regions now known as Yucatan, Chiapas and Tabasco were the cradle-lands of primitive American civilization. From this land, in very early days, went out colonies which established themselves in Honduras, Peru and Guatemala, carrying with them the culture and arts of civilized men.

From here also detached bodies moved northward and settled in parts of the territory known to-day as Mexico, where they built Mitla, Xochicalco, and other cities whose ruins excite our astonishment and admiration.

Everywhere in these lands we find the tidal remains of an ancient race which welled up from its primal bed in Yucatan, multiplied and rolled on over the entire continent. Everywhere also are the melancholy memorials of a people who, after accomplishing great things, ran their course and perished in the veiled ages of prehistoric times. In Copan, Chichin-Itza and Palenque are the remains of a cultivated, polished and enterprising people who, like the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, had passed through all the stages and gradations belonging to the rise and fall of Babylonian and Persian Empires.

They reached the highest material civilization and perished as perished the people of Heliopolis and Memphis. In the romance of the world's history there is nothing more pathetic than the ruins of Palenqué. Discovered by accident, its original name is as entirely forgotten as are the names of those who built the city. It is but another witness to the world's mutations and to the eternal truth that:

“Nations melt

From Power's high pinnacle, when they have felt
The sunshine for a time, and downward go.”

It was desolate and in ruins when, in 1520, Cortez, on his conquering march to Honduras, passed within a day's march of the city and makes no mention of it in his reports.

DECLINE AND FALL OF PRE-COLUMBIAN CIVILIZATION.

It is impossible to deny the civilization and vast antiquity of these prehistoric people without invoking the aid of arguments, negations and criticisms which would destroy the credibility of all history. When you move among the remains of these forest shrouded and phantom cities and gaze upon the ruined temples, altars and monuments, you know that they are but the pitiful fragments left after the wreck of a civilization that was lost long ago in the awful storms of civil war, of pestilence, or in the gradual debasement of individual and national life.

Standing among the wreck and ruin of the temples, statuary and altars of this vanished race, whose language no man may speak, whose faces are unlike those of any people known to us, it is impossible not to credit them with a certain grandeur of thought, high architectural skill, indomitable energy, and a debasement of moral and religious life supremely sad and pitiful. We do not know how, like Milton's angels, these civilized people fell from their high estate, never to rise again. Possibly, their civilization, like that of many ancient races, was destroyed by their own pride and arrogance, their own vices and corruption for:

“This is the moral of all human tales;
'Tis but the sad rehearsal of the past.
First, freedom, then glory; when that fails,
Wealth, vice, corruption, barbarism at last.
And history with all her volumes vast,
Hath but one page.”

Without doubt feuds and fratricidal wars wore them down and possibly plagues and famines. Flying before their victorious conquerors defeated remnants fled northward into the forest and in time lost the best part of their civilization. They lost their social strength, their historic memories, arts, traditions, crafts and, in many instances, the very means and methods of cultivating the soil.

Who may deny that the savage or barbarian tribes who roamed the plains or peopled the forests of North America, in the memory of men yet living, were not the descendants of these hunted families; these remnants from a civilization that in remote ages was lost in lurid storms of war, or disappeared under adverse conditions which then, as now, make for the decay of national unity, national virtue and character. Observing in particular the social and the family state and the condition of the Canadian Indians from our own observation of their habits and our limited knowledge of their history, we note that the same fortunes have followed their migrations that followed those of all dispersed and scattered races.

When human beings become destitute and desperate conditions of existence confront them, barbarism and savagery will, in time, overtake them. When driven by the fortunes of war, or under the dire pressure of famine, from its own land, the flying remnant gradually separates from the civilization it carries from its home, it loses its culture just as we would lose it now, with all our refinement, if we were forced to live the nomadic or the hunter's life with its trials and hardships. And in the forests and desert wilderness to which the fugitives fled for safety, we can well imagine desperate conditions of existence and, therefore, impossible conditions of civilization.

CRADLE LANDS OF OUR CANADIAN INDIANS.

From this civilized race, inhabiting in remote times Yucatan and Central America, came by way of Cuba and Florida, our North American Indians and also our Algonquins and Hurons. When Jacques Cartier ascended the St. Lawrence to Montreal, in 1535, the Indians he then encountered were in the neolithic stage, for their pipes, spear heads and arrow tips were deftly formed and polished. Their pottery was remarkably well fashioned and decorated with patterns and figures like unto those on the pottery now cased in the museum of Guatemala City. The Canadian Hurons and Algonquins of Champlain's time retained in their limited vocabulary many tropic words such, for example, as *Calumet*, *sicicouet* (chi-chi-koue or rattle), *sagamite*; *petun* (tobacco) and many other words.*

Advancing northward they brought with them their feast and war dances, worship of the sun and the serpent, veneration for fire, belief in the immortality of the soul and in good and evil spirits, exogamy or denial of marriages among blood relatives, the law of maternal descent, methods of curing disease, painting the faces of their dead and burying with the corpse, pipes, weapons, provisions and various articles to be used in the spirit world. All these and many rites and ceremonies, with sorcerers, shamans and prophets, they inherited from their southern forbears of immemorial times. They brought with them in their emigrations the seeds of tobacco, sunflower, squash, beans and maize or Indian corn. They retained the knowledge of moulding pottery, of fleshing and curing hides and

*The word *petun*, the Bureau of American Ethnology informs us, is used by Central and South American tribes for tobacco.

utilizing shell beads for wampum, which arts were practised among the Maya and Quicha tribes as late as the time of Oviedo. Many of the ceremonial, social and religious practices of our Indians are almost identically the same as those of the Mayas and Aztecs who lived when Cortez landed, 1519, at Veru Cruz. Moreover the colour of our Indians indicates a southern origin. It takes thousands of years to give a new colour to a race and thousands of years under changed climatic conditions, to alter that colour. To any one familiar with the early history of the tribes of Louisiana, especially with that of the Natches, who retained the worship of perpetual fire and the practice of human sacrifice, the similarity of their religious rites, customs and habits, with those of the Mayas and Quiches of Yucatan will be at once perceived.

The discovery of tumuli, mounds and fortifications, extending in ranges through the valleys of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and through New York state into Ontario; the ruins of cities discovered ninety years ago in Arkansas and Wisconsin, suggest a migration and dispersion of the aboriginal tribes that in remote times crossed dry shod over the land bridge which united Yucatan, Cuba and Florida. That such a causeway existed in early times is now admitted by hydrographers and students of physical geography, including the late M. Fontaine Maury, the eminent hydrographer and physicist.

NOTE—Independently of my own observations, I have, in this article, drawn freely from the writings of Señor Enrique Juan Palacios, Mr A. F. Bandelier, the late Señor Manuel Orozcoy Berra, John L. Stephens and Señor Antonio Garcia Cubas. The illustrations are copied from the drawings of M. F. Catherwood.





